

National Student Clearinghouse (NSC)

Frequently Asked Questions v1.0

General Questions

Q – Where can I go to find out more information on the Wisconsin DPI's statewide contract with the NSC?

A – For more information on how your school or district can begin using StudentTracker, or to obtain the StudentTracker for High Schools Agreement which will need to be filled out and submitted to the Clearinghouse, please visit the following website: [Postsecondary Data & Reporting: LEA Integration](#).

Q – What is the timeframe of the Wisconsin DPI's statewide contract with the NSC?

A – The current statewide contract is in effect from May 1, 2010 – April 30, 2011. An option to continue the contract through April 30, 2012 is available but will be reviewed at the end of the first year before renewal. DPI will provide advanced notification to all districts/high schools of any change to the existing statewide contract with the NSC. After the statewide contract is terminated, districts/schools will have the option to continue using StudentTracker based on the schedule of fees detailed in attachment 2. The process for continuing or discontinuing use of StudentTracker will be communicated at the time the statewide contract is terminated.

Q – If I am either a District Charter School or a Non-District Charter School, can I utilize StudentTracker?

A – Yes, all charter schools can utilize StudentTracker.

Q – Will a K-8 school district be able to utilize StudentTracker to track their students' postsecondary enrollment after they graduate from high school?

A – A K-8 district can submit the agreement to the NSC to utilize StudentTracker. While StudentTracker is utilized most often by high schools and districts with high schools, a K-8 district can most certainly utilize StudentTracker to determine if prior students enrolled in postsecondary institutions captured by the NSC.

Q – Can private schools utilize this service under the statewide contract?

A – No, not at this time.

Q – Will the use of StudentTracker be managed through the LDS-MDAT system, or will it be a stand-alone process?

A – The agreement to use StudentTracker is between a district/non-district charter and the NSC only. NSC will provide a login and reports that are separate from MDAT. When a district/non-district charter submits the agreement form to the NSC, a

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contact from the NSC will set you up in their system so that you can submit files and receive postsecondary data from their database.

Q – Will the data received from StudentTracker include the WSN so we can link it to data in our student information system?

A – The WSN is a unique, private data element utilized currently between the District/School and DPI. Since the relationship and data exchange will occur between the individual District/School and the NSC, the WSN will not be included in the postsecondary data returned to you from the NSC. However, you are able to include a local identifier in your file so that when you receive the postsecondary data from the NSC you are able to link it back to your data.

LEA/NSC Agreement

Q – If a district/school submits an agreement to the NSC to utilize StudentTracker, what is DPI's role in the process? Will DPI be included in the agreement or the file exchange process?

A – The Department of Public Instruction recently signed a statewide contract with the National Student Clearinghouse. The contract enables DPI to obtain postsecondary enrollment and completion data for Wisconsin graduates, separate from data exchanges between districts/schools and the NSC. This state-level data will be integrated into the LDS. In addition, each individual high school can submit—at no cost—a file with student graduate information to obtain similar data for local analysis. The district/school agreement to use StudentTracker establishes a relationship directly between the school/district and the NSC. DPI will not be involved in either the agreement or individual file exchanges between each district/school and the NSC. The LDS team at DPI is available for support and to answer any questions you may have during the statewide contract timeframe. Please email ldshelp@dpi.wi.gov with any questions.

Q – What exactly does the language mean in attachment 2? It sounds like there is a fee associated with using StudentTracker.

A – The State of Wisconsin has entered into an agreement which covers the StudentTracker subscription fee for all public high schools and districts in Wisconsin. The verbiage regarding the fee is true for when the State contract expires. Attachment 2 was updated as of 7/20/2010 with clarified language.

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Q – Why are there two fax numbers in the agreement? Which one do we use? The fax number on page 1 is 703-742-4234. The fax number on the last page is 703-733-4196.

A – The correct fax number to use to submit the agreement is 703-742-4234. The second fax number has been removed from the agreement as of 7/20/2010.

Q – When filling out the agreement, who should be listed as the contacts to use StudentTracker?

A – The StudentTracker agreement allows for 3 individuals to be added as contacts for different reasons. At the district level, the Executive Contact might be the District Administrator (the person with authority to sign contracts). The Billing Contact may be the same individual as well. The Technical Contact (the person responsible for submitting and receiving the data files) would most likely be the person who normally works with your data. We have seen the District Assessment Coordinator assigned to this role.

Q – If I already have a district or school contract with the NSC, what do I do?

A – At this time please follow the steps on the LDS website for submitting an agreement to utilize StudentTracker through the statewide contract. When the contract is reviewed by the NSC they will determine that an agreement is already in place and will then extend your contract at no additional cost. In addition, you will be able to use your current user information for StudentTracker.

Q – In the NSC agreement for districts/schools, it mentions that the NSC will store data we submit in their data warehouse. Is this correct?

A – Yes, this is correct. The NSC will incorporate the following data elements from the district/school submission file into its database: Student name, High school, Year of diploma, Designation of honors diploma, Student date of birth, and FERPA block indicator. These data elements are all directory data elements and will add to the capability of the NSC database to supply graduation and enrollment information.
Note: WSN should not and will not be stored in the NSC data warehouse.

Q – What data is considered directory data?

A – Each individual district defines directory data through its pupil record policy. Wisconsin Statute [s.118.125\(1\)\(b\)](#), includes as directory data “those pupil records which include the pupil's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, photographs, degrees and awards received and the name of the school most recently previously attended by the pupil.

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Additional information from FERPA on directory information can be found here: [FERPA Model Notice for Directory Information](#).

FERPA

Q – Does the data requested by StudentTracker from districts meet FERPA guidelines? If StudentTracker uses any student data inappropriately, is the district held harmless?

A – Please review the NSC’s statement on FERPA compliance: <http://www.nationalstudentclearinghouse.org/highschools/ferpa.htm>. There is no FERPA issue as long as the district identifies the data sent to the NSC as directory data-which they are permitted to do. Thus, there is no way that StudentTracker could inappropriately use the student data. If the district does not identify the data they are planning to share as directory data, they can’t share it.